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ABSTRACT

Hispanic Americans are one of the fastest growing demographic groups of the U.S. population. The Hispanic American population increased 53% from 1980 to 1990, and 27% from 1990 to 1996. By the year 2005, Hispanic Americans will surpass Blacks as the largest "minority group," and by 2010, Hispanics will outnumber the nation's Blacks, Asian Americans, and American Indians combined. In 1997, the median age of the Hispanic population was 27 years old compared to 36 for the nonHispanic white population. Nearly 9 of 10 Hispanic Americans live in just 10 states. They have immigrated from many countries, but the largest Hispanic group in 1990 was from Mexico. Puerto Ricans were the second largest group, and people of Cuban origin ranked third. Hispanic Americans have the lowest rates of high school and college graduation of any major population group, and the continued influx of Hispanic immigrants with low education suppresses statistics of overall Hispanic educational levels. Mexicans had the lowest education attainment, with only 47% having received a high school diploma or higher. However, about 70% of Hispanics born in the United States had completed high school in 1996. U.S. born Hispanics are also more likely to have completed at least 4 years of college, at 12%, compared to the 8% of foreign-born Hispanics who completed college. The median income of Hispanic males was 78% that of non-Hispanic White males, while the median earnings of Hispanic females was 62% of the income of non-Hispanic White females. Just over one-fourth of Hispanic American families lived below the poverty level in 1996, and in 1992, 26.9% of Hispanics received some type of major means-tested assistance. Hispanic unemployment rates have also been consistently higher than non-Hispanic unemployment rates. (Contains two tables and two graphs.) (SLD)

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1

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Executive Summary

POPULATION RESOURCE CENTER

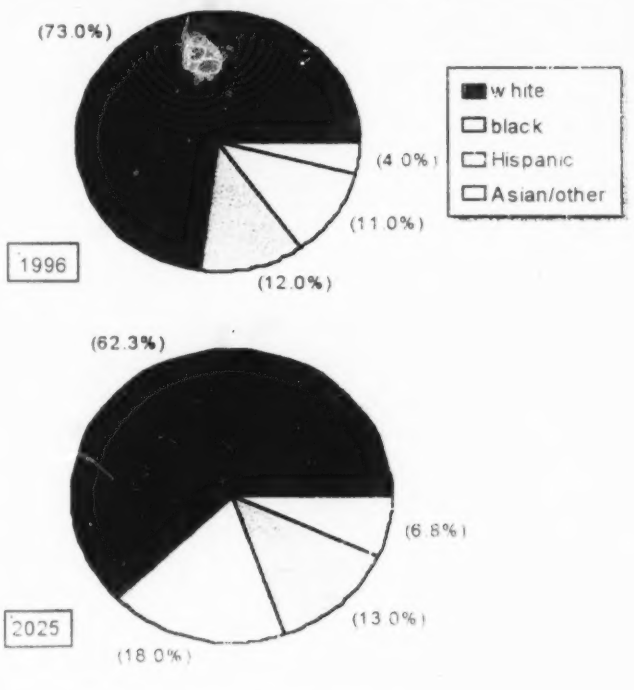
A PROFILE OF HISPANIC AMERICANS

•Hispanic Americans are one of the fastest growing demographic groups of the U.S. population. The Hispanic population increased 53 percent from 1980 to 1990, and 27 percent from 1990 to 1996. Since 1995, growth in the Hispanic population is adding more people to the U.S. every year than any other racial or ethnic group.

•By the year 2005, Hispanic Americans will surpass blacks as the largest "minority group," and by 2010, Hispanics will outnumber the nation's blacks, Asian Americans, and American Indians combined. If current demographic trends continue, by 2050, the Hispanic population is projected to reach nearly 100 million, 1 out of every 4 Americans.

•Hispanic Americans are younger than non-Hispanics. In 1997, the median age of the Hispanic population was 27 years old compared to 36 for the non-Hispanic white population. Only 5 percent of Hispanics are over 65 years old compared to 14 percent of non-Hispanic whites.

The U.S. Population by Race and Ethnicity, 1996 & 2025



Source: Population Bulletin and U.S. Census

•More than one half (53 percent) of Hispanics born in the U.S. were under 18 in 1996, compared with only 13 percent of those born outside the United States. The proportion over 65 was 4 percent among Hispanics born in the U.S. and 7 percent among Hispanic immigrants.

•Spanish is the second most common language spoken at home in the United States. In the 1990 Census, 17 million people over the age of 5 years old reported they spoke Spanish. Of those, 48 percent reported that they did not speak English "very well" and spoke Spanish in the home.

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Geographic Concentration

•Although Hispanics reside in every state, nearly 9 out of 10 live in just ten states. California is home to one in three Hispanics, and Texas to one in five. While Hispanics make up 11 percent of the nation's population, they are 13 percent or more of the population in New York (13%), Arizona (19%), California (26%), Texas (26%), and New Mexico (39%).

Six Largest Hispanic Metropolitan Areas by Ethnic Group, 1996

Consolidated Metropolitan Areas	Mexican	Puerto Rican	Cuban	Central/South American	Other Hispanic	non-Hispanic
San Francisco-Oakland-San Jose	11%	-	-	3%	1%	85%
Los Angeles-Riverside-Anaheim	30%	-	-	7%	2%	61%
Houston-Galveston-Brazoria	23%	-	-	4%	-	73%
Chicago-Gary-Lake County	9%	-	-	-	3%	88%
New York-New Jersey-Long Island	-	6%	-	6%	5%	83%
Miami-Ft. Lauderdale	1%	5%	20%	14%	1%	59%

March 1996 Current Population Survey.

Health and Fertility

•In 1995, the total fertility rate (TFR) of Hispanic women was 3.0, compared with 1.8 for non-Hispanic white women and 2.2 for non-Hispanic black women. Among Hispanic groups the TFR varies widely, ranging from 1.7 for Cuban women to 3.3 for Mexican women. In 1996, the percent of out-of-wedlock births to women of Hispanic descent was 41 percent compared to 70 percent among blacks and 26 percent among non-Hispanic whites.

•Births to Hispanics contributed nearly two-thirds of the increase in the Hispanic population during 1995. Of the 7 million Hispanic women 15 to 44 years old in 1994, 4.0 million reported that they were of Mexican ancestry. The fertility rate for Mexican-American women in 1994 was 111 births per 1,000 women of child bearing age, a rate about twice as high as for the non-Hispanic population (61 per 1,000).

•Of all the Hispanic groups, women born in Mexico contributed 27 percent of all California births in 1992, compared with only 7 percent in 1970. Women born in Mexico accounted for 61 percent of Hispanic women giving birth in California. Fertility rates for women of Mexican ancestry were significantly lower among those born in the U.S. (85 per 1,000) compared with those women born in Mexico (143 per 1,000).

•Among specified groups of the Hispanic population, the infant mortality rate (IMR) for Mexican infants was 8 deaths per 1,000 live births. The IMR for Puerto Rican infants was 9 and for Cuban infants was 6. In 1996, the IMR of 5.8 per 1,000 live births of all Hispanic infants was lower than the rate of 6 for non-Hispanic white infants and 14.2 for blacks.

Immigration

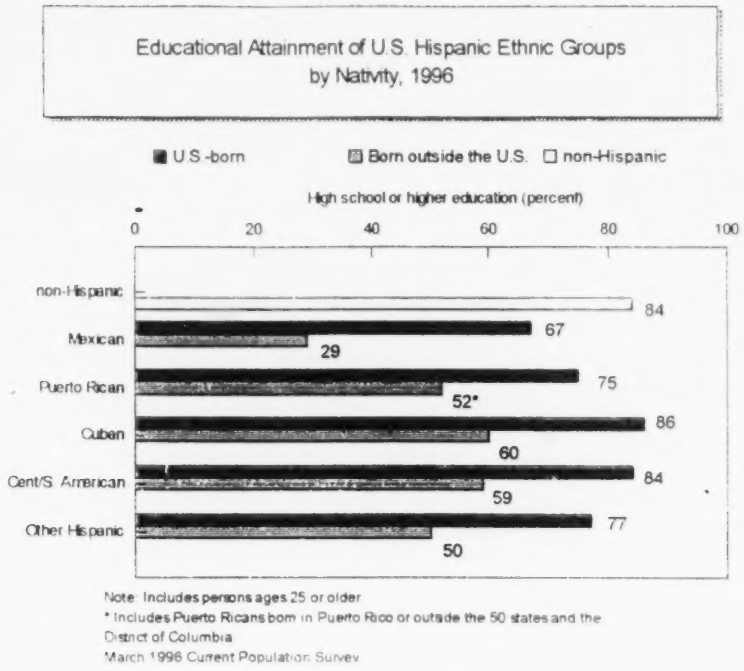
•Hispanic Americans are from Mexico, Puerto Rico, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, all Spanish-speaking countries of Central and South America, and Spain. In 1990, the largest Hispanic group, at 14 million people, were Mexican. Puerto Ricans were the second largest group with over 3 million, and people of Cuban origin ranked third with slightly over one million. The largest number of immigrants were from Mexico (111,398) and the Dominican Republic (51,189). "Natives" are persons born in the United States, Puerto Rico, or an outlying area of the United States and persons who were born in a foreign country who had at least one parent who was

a U.S. citizen. In 1997, over 40 percent of all foreign-born persons in the United States came from Mexico and other Spanish speaking countries of Latin America.

•Almost half of undocumented immigrants of Hispanic origin are from Mexico, with 3 million people undocumented.

Education

•Hispanic Americans have the lowest rates of high school and college graduation of any major population group. The continued influx of Hispanic immigrants with low education levels suppresses statistics of overall Hispanic educational levels.



•In 1996, of any Hispanic group, Mexicans had the lowest educational attainment (47 percent received a high school diploma or higher), while Cubans and other Hispanics had the highest (64 and 66 percent respectively received a high school diploma or higher). Slightly over 5 in 10 Hispanics aged 25 and over were high school graduates in 1994, compared to slightly more than 4 in 10 in 1980.

•However, about 70 percent of Hispanics born in the United States had completed high school in 1996, compared with 42 percent of those born abroad. The greatest difference is seen among Mexicans: 67 percent of U.S. born Mexicans had completed high school in 1996 compared to 29 percent of those born outside of the United States. U.S. born Hispanics are also more likely than other Hispanics to have completed at least 4 years of college-12 percent versus 8 percent in 1996.

•In comparison, 83 percent of non-Hispanic whites and 73.8 percent of non-Hispanic blacks have completed four years of high school or more. Almost 25 percent of non-Hispanic whites and 13.2 of non-Hispanic blacks have completed four years of college or more.

Family

•In the 1990 census, 63 percent of Hispanic families had children under age 18, compared to 47 percent of non-Hispanic families. Hispanic families, which averaged 3.56 persons in 1996, are larger than non-Hispanic black families (2.81 persons) and non-Hispanic white families (2.60 persons).

•In 1996, sixty-eight percent of Hispanic families were married couples versus 46 percent of blacks and 83 percent of whites. In 1996, the median income of Hispanic families was $24,906, equal to 67 percent of the income for non-Hispanic white families. For comparison, black families' median income in 1995 was 63 percent of the non-Hispanic white families.

•In 1996, twenty-six percent of Hispanic families were headed by females. Among non-Hispanic white families, 13 percent were headed by females and 47 percent of black families were headed by women.

•Puerto Ricans had the highest rate of female headed households among Hispanics, with 42 percent in 1996. Also, Puerto Ricans had the highest percent of female headed households below the poverty rate of any group at 64 percent in 1995. About half of all Hispanic female headed households were poor compared to 45 percent of blacks and 22 percent of whites.

Race/ ethnic group	1996 Female-headed families	1995 Below Poverty*
Total population	**18**	**32**
Non-Hispanic	**17**	**30**
white	13	22
black	47	45
Other non-Hispanic**	17	33
Hispanic	**26**	**49**
Mexican	21	50
Puerto Rican	42	64
Cuban	19	29
Central/South American	29	35
Other Hispanic	32	50
Born in U.S.	28	47
Born outside U.S.***	24	51

*Female-headed families.
**Non-Hispanic American Indian, Eskimo, Aleut, Asian, and Pacific Islander.
***Includes Puerto Rican householder born outside the 50 states and the District of Columbia
March 1996 Current Population Survey

Income and Employment

•The median income of Hispanic males ($17,474) was 78 percent that of non-Hispanic white males ($22,153), while the median earnings of Hispanic females ($8,382) was 62 percent of the income of non-Hispanic white females ($13,431).

•Just over one-fourth (27 percent) of Hispanic families lived below the poverty level in 1996, about the same level as for black families (26%), and more than four times the rate for non-Hispanic white families (6%). Hispanic children were more likely than non-Hispanic white children to be living below the poverty level. About 39.9 percent of Hispanic children under 18 years old were living in poverty, compared with only 13.2 percent of non-Hispanic white children. In 1993, the poverty rate for Cubans was 17 percent compared to Puerto Ricans with a 35 percent poverty rate. Puerto Rican families had the lowest average income in 1993, at $20,000.

•In 1992, 26.9 percent of Hispanics received some type of major means-tested assistance (covers AFDC, general assistance, SSI, food stamps, Medicaid, and housing assistance), compared to 10.3 percent of non-Hispanic whites and 33 percent of blacks. One in eight, or 500,000 Hispanic mothers between 15-44 were on the Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), and nearly half of Hispanic WIC mothers were born outside of the United States. For comparison, one in sixteen or 2 million mothers that are not of Hispanic origin were WIC recipients.

•The Hispanic unemployment rates have been consistently higher than non-Hispanic unemployment rates. In 1992, the Hispanic unemployment rate had risen to 11 percent compared to 8 percent for non-Hispanics. In 1994, unemployment ranged 7 percent for Cubans to a high of 14 percent for Puerto Ricans. In 1996, 10 percent of Hispanics were unemployed compared to 5.5 percent of non-Hispanics.

This summary was prepared by Melissa Hernandez, Program Assistant at the Population Resource Center in Fall, 1997, and reviewed by Marta Tienda, Ph.D. and Charles Westoff, Ph.D. of the Office of Population Research at Princeton University. Sources include: Jorge del Pinal and Audrey Singer, "Generations of Diversity: Latinos in the United States," *Population Bulletin*, vol. 52, no. 3 (Washington, DC: Population Reference Bureau, Inc., October 1997); Katharine Q. Seelye, "The New U.S.: Grayer and More Hispanic," *The New York Times*, 27 March 1997, page A32; "Immigration is Transforming New York City," The Taub Urban Research Center, New York University, December 1997; and from the U.S. Bureau of the Census: Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1996 (116th Edition.) Washington, D.C.,1996; March 1997 Current Population Survey, reports P60-198, P60-197, P20-495u, and P20-494.

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